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THOMAS E BULLARD

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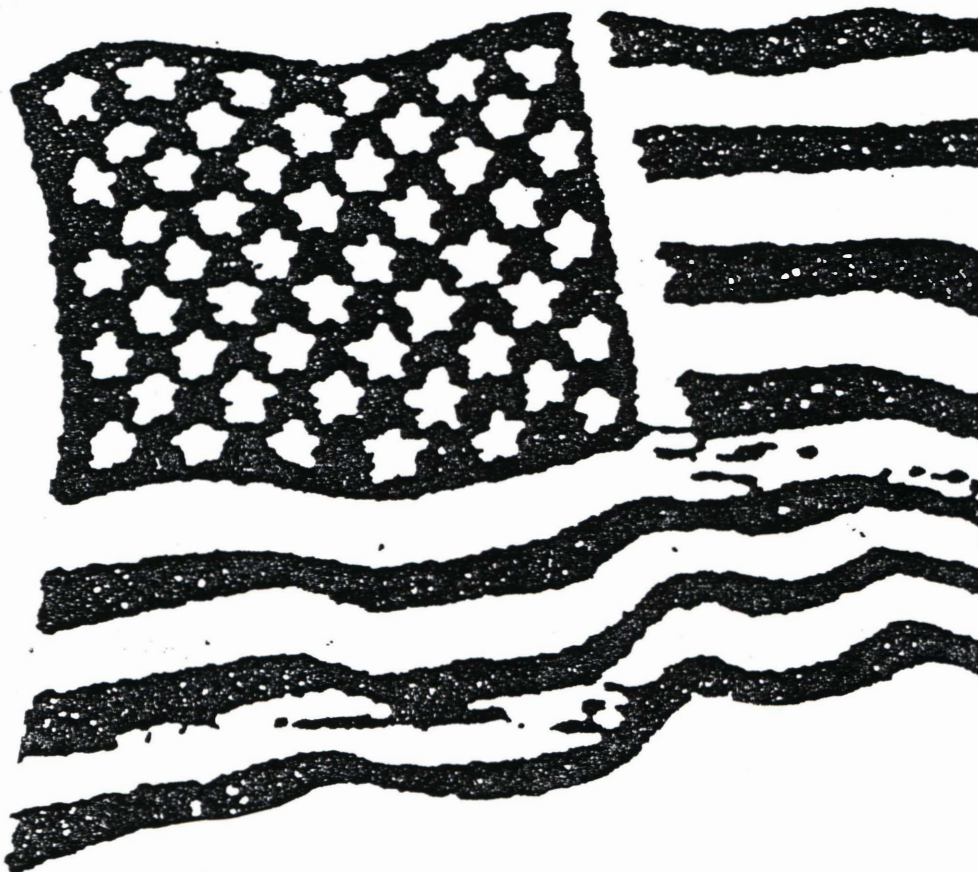
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LETTERS FROM AMERICA

A number of articles in recent issues of *Magonia* have alluded to the growing split between European and American approaches to the UFO mystery. At the Lyon conference in May this year the differing attitudes produced something of a culture clash (although one which was conducted with great *politesse*), and the BUFORA International meeting in London again showed evidence of the widening rift. Walt Andrus's presentation of documents and photographs from Gulf Breeze encountered much more sceptical comment from the assembled European ufologists than Mr Andrus was apparently used to in the States.

Having said that, it is easy to over-estimate the differences. Although the Gulf Breeze presentation produced a sceptical response from the ufological glitterati at the London conference, it was interesting to note that when the chairman asked for a show of hands on whether the audience thought the photos genuine or not, there was a silent majority (oh well, a silent 40%) who voted yes.

Similarly, not all American ufologists are in thrall to the

ETH. In these pages Martin Kottmeyer has challenged the major assumptions of the post-modernist American ufologists, and we are happy to note the return of one of the major voices of the humanist ufology of the 1970's *Caveat Emptor*, after a hiatus of over a decade, renewing its challenge to establishment thinking, and recalling the days when your editors exalted the progressive thinking coming from the US and berating the hide-bound ETH domination of British ufology!

Now *Magonia* presents papers by two leading American ufologists, neither particularly noted as hard-core nuts and bolts proponents, who ask whether the American emphasis on ETH, physical abductions, and government involvement are really as out-of-bounds for serious discussion as many Europeans seem to think. Many aspects of the American UFO scene may seem bizarre or naive to us, but when seen within the context of what is actually happening in America and American ufology, there may be justification for the attitudes taken, even if we cannot accept the conclusions that others have drawn.

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PETER ROGERSON'S NORTHERN ECHOES

With all the talk of abductions and whether they can be accounted for in purely folkloric terms or not, it would be interesting to track down abduction stories *in print* before the Hill case. One early reference is to be found in Jacques Vallée's *Anatomy of a Phenomenon* (p.134 of my Spearman edition) referring to the alleged kidnapping of one Tom Brooe. From the context, this appears to have taken place in Florida in the summer of 1952. Can anyone provide details?

Flying Saucer Review continues to plug the Creighton theory of false consciousness and grand conspiracy. In this, anyone who has the temerity to disagree with the Great Guru is automatically assumed to have been telepathically nobbled by communist djinns. In fact anyone whose views do not coincide with the tenets of Mr

We regret that due to increased printing and postal costs we are obliged to increase our subscription rates to British and European readers (the slightly improved \$/£ exchange rate means we can hold off increasing USA rates for the moment). Our new rate will be £4.00 per year inland. £5.00 p.a. Europe and the Republic of Ireland.

To try and take some of the sting out of this increase, starting with the next issue, we intend to run every other issue with 20 pages instead of 16. Incidentally, French subscribers may like to save themselves a few centimes by sending us a 50 franc note rather than an expensive international money order.

Crichton's philosophy (a curious hybrid, by John Junor out of Rudolph Steiner) or whose activities would not find favour with the Colonel and the other regulars in the bar of the Rickmansworth Golf Club, is assumed to be part of the great conspiracy.

As Creighton is able to globalise his fantasies, and keep them strictly non-domestic, he has acquired numerous disciples, and *FSR's* masthead boasts many consultants, some of whom may actually still read it, and a hard core of occultist, radical-right correspondents. One of the *Review's* French correspondents informs us that the current generation of young French ufologists (presumably Maugé, Pinvidic, Méheust, etc.) "while not directly manipulated by the communists... are a muddled up mess of Marxo-Cartesianism" plus "*soixante-huitard* leftism, left-wing Catholicism and God knows what else..." In other words jolly good chaps and a very healthy change from what were rumoured to be the political proclivities of some of the old guard of French ufology.

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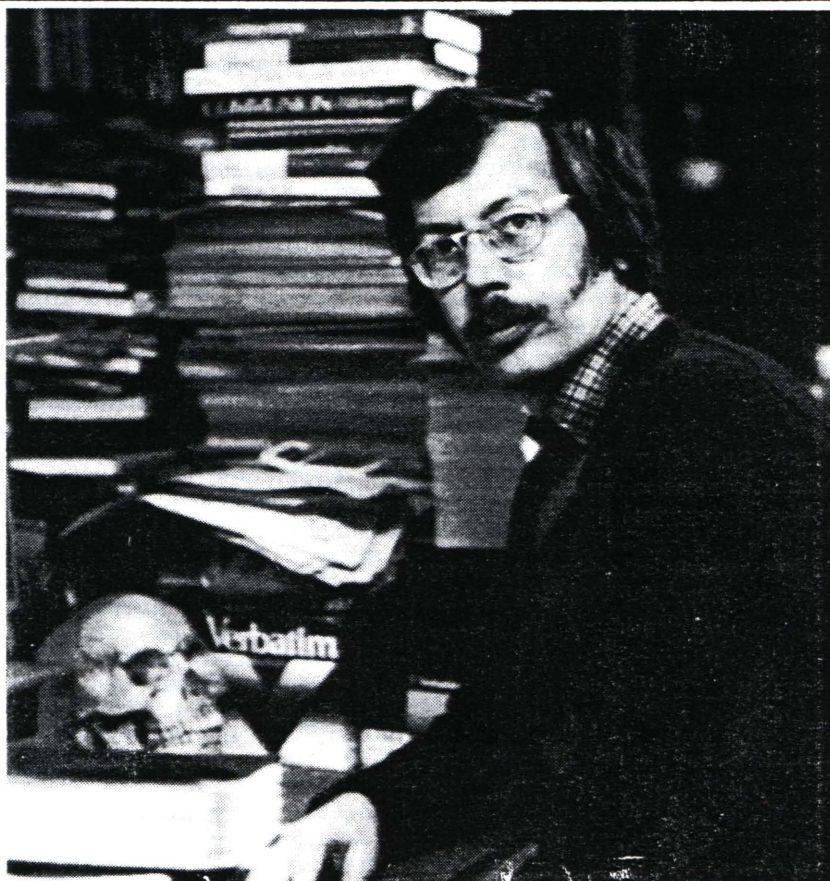
Is Charles Fort related to the well-known entertainer of former times, George Formby Jrn? This question was prompted while reading a biography of the Warrington-connected Formby in the course of work, therein finding his real name was George *Hoy* Formby. And we all know that Charlie was actually Charles Hoy Fort. There does not appear to be any very conclusive evidence that Fort played the ukelele, but the coincidence is striking. I leave it to synchronicity freaks to work out the full implications.

Americans have turned a deaf ear to social and psychological explanations for UFO phenomena, by and large. *Magonia* and its predecessors have long provided a voice for these ideas, a voice the editors must have felt was crying in the American wilderness, unheeded for these many years. Times have changed. The editors can take cheer that their magazine now provokes almost as many grumbles among American ufologists as the *Skeptical Inquirer*. The past two issues alone (Nos 31 and 32) caused uproars when Edoardo Russo and Gian Grassino berated Americans for their attention to Gulf Breeze, crash retrievals, abductions, and bedroom intrusions; when Manfred Cassirer and Martin Kottmeyer not only proposed a psychological explanation for abductions, but even dared to do a good job of it; and when Hilary Evans sinned the great sin of praising Phil Klass and his abduction book, a well-nigh mortal transgression.

To be fair, Europeans and *Magonia* can claim no monopoly on opposition to the extraterrestrial hypothesis. Many articles published in the leading American UFO journals opt for alternatives, as people are thinking and the forum is open. At the same time these authors may feel like honorary Europeans - or exiles - for all the attention their ideas receive. No one over here could doubt for a moment that the ETH dominates among the rank and file, as well as among most active researchers. Thanks in part to abductions, this hypothesis is enjoying a revival among the most serious ufologists. As thoughtful a researcher as Jerome Clark has rejected his Jungian musings from *The Unidentified* to write instead of 'The Fall and Rise of the Extraterrestrial Hypothesis'.

A parting of the ways between American and European ufologists has continued for a long time, but probably nothing has widened the separation as much as the abduction phenomenon. True to form, Americans have found aliens yet again, whereas Europeans and other followers of the left-hand path have regarded these increasingly fantastic stories as evidence for a modern mythology of psychological origin. Do the extraterrestrialists have a rational leg to stand on? For the sake of international peace and understanding, I will assume the role of apologist and answer in the affirmative. The belief in abduction by extraterrestrials has a firm rational basis, whether that belief is right or wrong.

Opposition to alien abductions follows two general strategies: one focuses on witnesses and explains their reports in psychological terms; the other focuses on report content and doubts its objectivity by pointing out its parallels with other phenomena.



THE AMERICAN WAY Truth, Justice and Abduction

Thomas E. Bullard

The least systematic of the witness-oriented explanations blames hypnosis, general familiarity with abduction ideas, and confabulation between an impressionable subject and an overzealous, true-believer ufologist as sufficient reasons to account for abduction stories. Largely external influences make an abductee in this view. The boundary-deficit and fantasy prone personality theories postulate a distinctive personality type which predisposes some people to altered states of consciousness, vividness of imagination, and confusion of the real with the unreal. An interpretation on a deeper plane introduces psychological constants as a potential source of abduction sights and events. One possibility is birth trauma imagery, another is psychic symbolism based on archetypes of the unconscious functioning in a psychodrama of personal transformation. Even more exotic proposals include the efficacy of thought

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BAKER, Robert A. 'The Aliens among us: Hypnotic Regression Revisited'; *Skeptical Inquirer*, 12, 1987, 147-162. 'Q: Are UFO Abduction Experiences Real? A: No, No, a Thousand Times No!'; *Journal of UFO Studies*, 1, 1989, 104-110.

BARTHOLEMW, Robert E. and BASTERFIELD, Keith, 'Abduction States of Consciousness', 'Abductions: The Fantasy-Prone Personality Hypothesis', *IUR*, 13/2, 3 (March-April, May-June, 1988), 7-9, 15, 9-11.

KOTMEYER, Martin, 'Break a Leg! The UFO Experience as Theatre', *Magonia*, 27 (September 1987), 3-6.

LAWSON, Alvin H., 'Hypnosis of Imaginary UFO Abductees' in FULLER, Curtis (ed.), *Proceedings of the First International UFO Congress*, New York, Warner Books, 1980, 195-238.

ROGO, D. Scott, 'The Abduction of Sammy Desmond', *IUR*, 12/4 (July-August 1987), 11.

GROSSO, Michael, 'The Secret Symbolism Behind UFO Abductions', *UFO Universa*, November 1988, 44-45, 62-63.

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KEEL, John; *The Eighth Tower*,

to manifest physical or quasi-physical objects, the induction of abduction visions by the electromagnetic energy from tectonic stress in rocks, or intervention by unknown powers to alter our habits of thought and behaviour for reasons beyond our ken.²

What the literalist approach offers is a largely self-evident reading of the reports. In a few cases where witnesses invoke religious or other ideas out of step with modern beliefs, interpretation is sanctioned, but seldom needed. Many reports conform to the ETH outright. They describe encounters with alien beings who arrive in spaceships and kidnap humans for purposes that include physical examination. The craft is clearly a product of advanced technology and the examination shows proper signs of scientific curiosity. Hints of planetary disasters and an interest in reproduction suggest that a pragmatic survival motive underlies these visits. The beings seem to control their captives by some form of mental influence, and this control may carry over beyond the abduction as major life changes follow in its stead.

No opponent denies that the ETH account of abduction stories is superficially plausible. The literalist reading certainly offers a self-contained answer. What opponents seem to reject is the naivety of that reading. It simply takes too much at face value without cracking a smile at how close such an explanation comes to science fiction mythology, or how much the stories resemble old lore in modern guise. Deaf and blind to all parallels or similarities, the ETH proponents exist in a vacuum. Since Americans seem to preserve this vacuum with a will, their adherence to the ETH looks to an outsider like a fool's errand instead of a rational choice.

A case can be made that the literalist view is less naive than it seems, and subjectivist sophistication is equally debilitating to rational decisions. Taking witnesses at their word may seem rash. Yet it is just as rash to reject their stories simply because they are fantastic. Some investigators of extraordinary experience narratives, such as David Hufford in his work with Old Hag encounters, break with received wisdom to conclude that witnesses sometimes describe such events with remarkable fidelity.³ Experience may give rise to belief, rather than belief to experience. Ufology offers many good reasons to doubt eyewitness testimony and demonstrates that presuppositions can exert remarkable influence over observations and reports. An anomalous event may be subjective in origin and culturally influenced in description, but this outcome is not inevitable. The liter-

alist looks with sympathy on abductees as the people closest to a strange event, and looks askance at the subjectivist who takes their error for granted.

Much blame has fallen on hypnosis as the real cause of abductions. This is well founded. Expert opinion is unanimous that hypnosis throws open the door to fantasy and confabulation, so that hypnotic testimony can combine fact and error into an inseparable, plausible unity. The risk is clear, but is it realised? If hypnosis truly shapes and distorts abduction testimony, some evidence of this influence should remain. Most critics ignore the reports that have emerged without use of hypnosis. They make up a substantial minority, and compare so favourably with reports obtained by hypnosis that almost no differences in form or content appear. If the hypnotist influences witnesses with his own beliefs, each investigator should leave some distinctive mark on the cases he investigates. Again a comparison shows that the cases of various investigators are all pretty much alike.

The trump card against hypnosis has been the experiments with non-abductees described by Alvin Lawson. Under hypnosis these non-abductees told stories very much like those of 'real' abductees, so the subjectivity of the reports seems sure. In fact these experiments convict neither hypnosis nor abductions. In a comparative test the accounts of non-abductees differed considerably from the accounts of real abductees, a difference best seen in descriptions of the beings. None of the experimental subjects reported the same type of being, but populated their narratives with a varied array of 'aliens'. The range of variety compares with that of the real cases, but the frequency of each type corresponds to chance distribution, and in no way approximates the regularity with which small grey humanoids appear among real cases. The similarities are of the more obvious sorts and assertions that the two bodies of reports are alike express more hope than reality.⁴ Americans may keep the faith with hypnosis for all the wrong reasons, but in fact there are sound reasons for that faith.

The same distrust applies to Jungian theories. They are beguiling, and Dennis Stillings can sweep up much of the abduction story into the Jungian scheme, but his argument remains unconvincing. The present world situation is supposed to be so dreadful that a salvation myth emerges into our consciousness, but when has the world ever not been in dreadful shape? If abductions seem too real to be dream-like, Stillings has the answer - they are not ordinary dreams but archetypal dreams. If abductions have a physical

component, he has an answer for this eventuality as well - the psychic and physical realms become one and indistinguishable.⁵ Joseph Campbell's myth of the hero follows a pattern of separation, initiation (ordeal, assimilation, and adoption), then return of a wiser, improved person. This pattern clearly fits abductions, but it just as well fits the life of a youth who goes off to college. As Freud is supposed to have said, sometimes a cigar is just a good smoke. An interpretation of abductions in terms of symbols and psychodrama is quite possible, but what makes it compelling? This psychological theory is broad enough to encompass almost anything, as speculative as the ETH, and little better credited by establishment science. In a standoff of faith against faith, little wonder that Americans reject the ornate schemas of Jungian thought for the simplicity of aliens.

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The more down-to-earth psychology of predisposition to fantasy is far more believable, but also far from proven. We understand all too little about abductees as individuals. What their personality traits and life circumstances may contribute to the story remains an unknown quantity and our scant knowledge impressionistic at best. Yet abductees seem to be a diverse group, not obviously prone to fantasy or boundary deficiency except by the circular argument that they report an abduction experience. A psychological profile of Charles Hickson and Calvin Parker shows no inclination to fantasy.⁶ The Slater study of nine abductees is cited by Kottmeyer as evidence that these subjects display boundary deficit symptoms.⁷ A sample of nine is sufficient to refute the charge that all abductees are psychotic, but hardly adequate to demonstrate that many of them have boundary deficit personalities. In fact the description of these individuals as 'distinctive, unusual, and interesting' suggests that they are more different than alike. June Parnell, whose doctoral work under Leo Sprinkle included personality testing of some 200 participants in his annual 'contactee conferences', found significant evidence for creativity and fantasy among subjects who reported communication with aliens, but no significant evidence among subjects reporting various UFO encounters. Considerable care must be taken in interpreting her work, since these

subjects are not all classical abductees by any means. Of those subjects I read as most likely to be abductees, their 'fantasy' scores are actually among the lowest, no higher than scores for people reporting only lights in the sky. In any case the expected hierarchy of scores fails to appear - there is no increase in fantasy indicators as the strangeness of UFO stories increases.⁸ Alexander Keul and Ken Phillips seem to find enhanced creative and artistic abilities among UFO reporters in general and not just among abductees.⁹ Any conclusion must be of the most tentative sort, but the meagre and oblique evidence available suggests no radical psychological departure of abductees from narrators of less fantastic UFO stories.

The search for parallels is dear to the hearts of folklorists who have engaged in it for decades on the premise that world-wide likenesses in narrative reflect a similarity of psychological experience among all humans, not a similarity of literal experience. A list of parallels between abductions and other cultural phenomena is impressive, including diminutive beings, kidnap, torture, enchantment, changelings, and a subterranean other-world. Probably no other discovery gives as much pause to proponents of literal abductions.

In comparing folklore and abductions, many features fit but at the same time many do not. The temptation is strong to call attention to the successes and ignore the failures. No reliable standards say how many hits against how many misses justify a comparison, but abduction reports differ in many ways from the cited parallels. Fairies do not fly spaceships or use eyelike scanning devices, for example. When abstracted to general terms, the features of the abduction story can match folklore or symbol systems with impressive fidelity. Yet the truth is, we have traditions for all occasions. Whatever the abduction story described, whether the beings roasted their captives on a spit or played pinocle with them, an equally appropriate tradition could be found and the parallel would look just as impressive.

The case for literal abductions stands on its merits as well as on the shortcomings of its adversaries. Multiple witnesses report some abductions, a significant criterion for objectivity. The explanation that shared fantasy or influence of one witness on another is responsible for these reports founders in as prominent an example as the Hill case, where Barney's experience took an independent course and complemented Betty's account without duplicating it. Accounts sometimes claim physical evidence in the form of body

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●● 6. HICKSON, Charles and MENDEZ, William; *UFO Contact at Pascagoula*, Tucson, Arizona, Wendelle C. Stevens, 1983, 245-260.

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●● 12. RANGLES,
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● 13. SWORDS,
Michael D.,
'Science and the
Extraterrestrial
Hypothesis in
Ufology', *Journal
of UFO Studies*, 1,
1989, 67-102.

marks, implants, residues, vanishing pregnancies, and landing traces. Appeals to alleged physical evidence are hackneyed in ufology. Critics are right to complain that such evidence has much in common with a mirage, but they must admit that proving the validity of some small physical sample would be difficult even with objects of truly alien origin. One of the more impressive arguments for literal abductions is the considerable coherency in form and content of the body of reliable reports. This coherency reaches down to certain minuscule details and squares with shared experience better than with personal fantasy or cultural learning. Multiple witnesses, physical evidence, and coherent narratives make an influential case for real abductions. Arguments for subjectivity appear lame against this sort of evidence, while its apparent tangibility, even if illusory, appeals strongly to American sensibilities.

What if abductions are literally true? Then the entire story falls into place without need for intellectual gymnastics. The 'Oz Factor', missing time, floating sensations and all other surreal aspects of the reports make sense, not as dreamlike events but as consequences of mental control exercised by aliens. They are advanced beings capable of interstellar travel and quasi-magical technology. The rounded, uniformly lighted interior of their craft is no womb image but just the place it seems to be, an examination room. Something has gone wrong with their planet and captives sometimes see it as devastated, dark or subterranean. This motif reinforces the claim that the beings use us for genetic materials in some vast project to save themselves, a project which includes implants into captives for monitoring purposes. These surreptitious purposes mesh in turn with motifs suggesting that the aliens are deceptive and secretive to a degree, most concerned with their examination and extraction procedures but pretending a concern and friendliness they do not feel, if indeed they can feel as we do. Learning our emotional makeup is part of their project. Piece by piece the puzzle appears to fit together.

Once accepted, the ETH can absorb almost any objection. Michael Swords has argued quite forcefully against the hybridisation hypothesis. The genetic makeup of true aliens would differ so enormously from ours that easy combination could not occur, while aliens with the technology to overcome this difficulty would have no need to turn kidnappers. They could get the result they want with less trouble by starting from scratch.¹⁰ David Jacobs counters that we do not know enough about the aliens to evaluate their capabilities and

limitations. What seems reasonable to us may not apply to them at all - and witnesses continue to describe hybrid babies.¹¹ A correspondent of mine unites several threads of the story when he suggests that the aliens had to jump into their ships and flee a sudden catastrophe, escaping with advanced transportation but only fragments of their former biotechnological expertise. Historical circumstance accounts for the odd mixture of advancement and backwardness we see in the visitors. Jenny Randles finds that British abductions are more likely to include human-like aliens than grey humanoids.¹² Apologists have proposed different races of aliens or screen memories to hide the true humanoid appearance.

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Such responses are shamelessly ad hoc rationalisations. Yet in light of the ETH, these excuses make sense. The abduction story itself is so fantastic that it necessarily exasperates unbelievers. It is simply too pat, too heedless of the difficulties aliens would face and the question of why ufologists should uncover so easily the best-kept secrets of these other-world conspirators. Again the same answer applies - never mind the whys and wherefores, the extraterrestrial explanation works. It satisfies believers with a systematic, internally rational account of the abduction phenomenon, all for the price of buying a single premise: alien origin. This notion has long been popular with Americans, at least American ufologists, and Swords has shown that the ETH of ufology is a natural extension of the scientific search for extraterrestrial life.¹³ Faith in literal abductions may signify a failure of critical thinking, but not a failure of reasoning powers.

A venerable genre of American literature is the 'Captured by the Indians' story. Many such accounts appeared in print from the 17th to the 19th centuries, and served such purposes as propaganda against the Indians, examples of God's providence, and exciting entertainment. Some narratives are pure fiction, and some of them are true. Most are a little of both. To complicate matters even more, narrators learned the tradition of this genre and cast their stories in



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its mould, adapting even personal experience to the form and stereotype of prior examples until distinctions between truth and fiction blurred beyond recognition. Theories, methods and comparisons can identify the rhetoric and formulas or point up the art and artifices of the genre, but the central dilemma remains unresolved: Is the story true or false? Any text can claim to be true, and if the only evidence is a text, fiction counterfeits truth to perfection. Theoretical positions suggest probabilities, but gain little purchase to separate the true from the false in any definitive way. If any one approach was always reliable, philosophy of science scholarship could fold up, but it stays a healthy enterprise.

We know the complexities surrounding the Indian narratives. Most of the abduction evidence is again in the form of texts, and non-literal interpretations have paid almost exclusive attention to this frustrating class of evidence. Abduction stories carry an added burden because we do not know if even one of them is true. Rival theories can flourish because no one has an infallible, all-conquering answer. Each solution has its strengths and weaknesses but none has proof, so choices may rely more on temperament than epistemological soundness.

Mark Rodeghier pointed out recently that different styles characterise European and American ufological enquiry.¹⁴ Europeans tend to work from the top down, starting with fully articulated, highly abstract theories and methods, seeking a place for the subject phenomenon within a broad scope of meanings. The phenomenon is secondary to the theory. It orders knowledge of many phenomena and neither stands nor falls on its success with any one of them. Success itself seems to have an aesthetic dimension, so that elegant integration of a phenomenon into the architecture of the system counts for more than close adherence to the facts. This primacy of the theory justifies taking a few liberties with the evidence, selecting, bending or abstracting it until the result is an idealised phenomenon matched to the theory, but perhaps no longer an accurate reflection of the original sources.

Americans reverse this order and work from the bottom up, wallowing in facts, often content just to accumulate and enumerate them. Explanations follow as an afterthought, on the grounds that the evidence speaks pretty much for itself. Suspicious of abstractions that range very far from the empirical base, Americans often feel satisfied to cobble together a few unsystematic generalisations and prefer to isolate phenomena rather than relate them. In

European eyes this approach is narrow and intellectually unadventurous. American devotion to the ETH looks like an urge to impose an outworn idea on abduction reports, an unimaginative literalism that downplays their fantastic character and refuses to give serious attention to alternatives. To American eyes Europeans are too impatient with evidence. They rush off in unseemly haste to abstract, theorise and debate theories without ever confronting the factual base on its own merits.

All right, while being true to their inclinations Europeans choose psychosocial explanations and Americans the ETH. Can we leave the matter there? I think not, because these choices have consequences. If any criterion of preference can be found between the European way and the American way of looking at abductions, that criterion lies in the treatment of evidence. Americans start with the more complex assumption when they opt for the ETH, and thereby violate the principle of parsimony; but Europeans enter a labyrinth of theoretical arguments where the phenomenon itself gets lost all too easily. The lure of comparisons and symbolic interpretations leads theoreticians into the errors of 'stewpot thinking', which Budd Hopkins has warned against.¹⁵

Right or wrong, an ETH interpretation of abductions keeps attention on the reports themselves. Some Europeans complain that abductions are largely an American phenomenon. Can they honestly say that they have actively sought abductees, or that European abductees would know where to turn for a sympathetic hearing of their suspicions or stories? Failure to find abductions may be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Respect for the ETH assures that investigators will welcome, value and seek out reports, whereas other assumptions may stifle enquiry and redirect research efforts toward sterile infighting over theoretical stances.

Given our present state of knowledge, recognising the tentativeness of any explanation is necessary on both sides of the physical and intellectual Atlantic. The reasons against the ETH are also many, but more diffuse and subtle, and poorly served by the plethora of unpersuasive alternatives raised thus far. Too often these proposals appear even more naive than the ETH in their treatment of texts, testimony and comparison. If taking witnesses at their word sets the literalist belief on a foundation of shifting sand, that base is still firmer than the thin air of theoretical speculations.

Ask any red-blooded American!

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Thomas E. Bullard has a degree in folklore from Indiana University. He has written a major comparative study of the abduction mystery, which is available from the Fund for UFO Research, price \$90. He is also the author of *The Airship File*, a massive compilation of original documentation of the 1897-98 airship scare.



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MOORE AND THE M I L I T A R Y Dennis Stacy

In the July 1989 *Magonia* Peter Rogerson postulates an interesting, but largely incomplete scenario regarding John Lears's UFO ravings, particularly the latter's call for the impeachment of the President and Congress for having entered into a 'diplomatic' arrangement or treaty whereby the little 'greys', the malevolent aliens, were allowed to abduct humans for their own purposes in exchange for advanced 'alien', i.e. UFO technology.

When a witness in this country is called before a judge in the course of a criminal trial, he or she is asked whether they testify they are about to give is "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?" Or at least that's the way it's presented on the TV, and we know the telly wouldn't lie.

And so it is with Rogerson's interpretation of the influences at work on Lear's psyche. It might well be true, too, that Lear is driven by archetypal, psychological demons that cause him to cast the UFO in paranoid terms. But it is not, to quote the bailiff of the court who does the swearing-in, the whole truth. That, as always, is more, or in this case Moore, complicated.

Just how contorted events can be surfaced at the summer symposium of MUFON held the first weekend in July in Las Vegas, the giant casino gambling strip and oasis in the desert considered the quintessential American crap-shoot. The theme of the symposium, to give Rogerson his due, was 'The UFO Cover-Up: A Government Conspiracy?' William Moore had been scheduled to speak Saturday night in front of Stanton Friedman, but was nowhere in evidence, nor had his paper been submitted previously to MUFON for publication in the symposium proceedings. Instead, Friedman and Moore switched slots, Moore arriving only about 15 minutes before his talk was scheduled to begin.

To the dismay of many, and the active consternation of several, Moore's talk turned out to be a lengthy refutation of, and 'confession' to, charges made by one Robert Hastings, which appeared in an article in the June issue of *MUFON Journal*. Hastings questioned, in part, whether Moore might not be a 'mole' or other agent in the hire of a government or military intelligence agency. Moore confessed that, indeed he had been, but largely in an unwitting role, an entirely unexpected revelation that resulted in angry cat-calls from some of Lear's more fervent followers, and once or twice threatened to bring the whole thing to a confused standstill.

Space may not permit a complete sorting out of the personalities and events involved but I'll try to be as brief and succinct as possible for those operating under the handicap of not being backgrounded in the intricate twists and turns of contemporary American ufology. Our summarised story begins ten years ago in the summer of 1979. Flush from having co-authored (with Charles Berlitz) the successful *Philadelphia Experiment*, Moore moved his family from Minnesota to Arizona, where he joined the board of directors of APRO. One of their more colourful constituents or contacts was a man named Paul Bennewitz, a physicist of sorts with his own small electronics concern. Thunder Science, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, home to Kirtland Air Force Base, the Manzano Nuclear Weapons Storage Facility and nearby Sandia Laboratories. Albuquerque then was a hotbed of government-military activity and research, particularly relating to SDI, the so-called 'Star Wars'. Bennewitz's house in the fairly affluent Four Hills section of town actually overlooked Manzano and Kirtland, which adjoins the city's municipal airport. It is not uncommon for commercial visitors to see the B-1 take off and land, as I have, at one of the runways Kirtland shares with the city. Kirtland is also the site of one of the world's largest wooden structures, a hangar sometimes used in the testing of EMP effects, the electromagnetic pulse storm associated with a nuclear explosion and capable of fusing the delicate electronic components employed in most space age weapon and communication systems.

It was also not uncommon for Bennewitz to see UFOs from his rooftop; in fact, he had countless stills and feet of film to 'prove' it. Unfortunately, according to Moore Bennewitz also had an overactive imagination and an absence of any sort of psychic governor that might have turned off or reduced some of his more extravagant and outrageous speculations. To others however, especially the flood of eager (and eventually influential) ufologists and researchers who soon

beat a path to his door, Bennewitz, at least early on, gave the outward appearance of an educated 'scientist' who knew whereof he spoke. It was this aura of high-tech hipness, as much as anything, that no doubt lent Bennewitz much of the influence he would later come to exert on American ufology as a whole.

At about the same time he would come into contact with Bennewitz, Moore claimed, he was also contacted by "A well-placed individual within the intelligence community who claimed to be directly connected to a high-level government project dealing with UFOs". This bird of prey, of course, is 'Falcon', the identity of whom has been the subject of much speculation, along with that of another of Moore's secret sources, 'Condor'. Moore maintained in Las Vegas that Falcon was *not* the much-rumoured Richard Doty, with the Air Force Office of Special Intelligence (AFOSI) Kirtland, but that in fact Doty was only the 'middle-man', though he would later allow himself to be identified as Falcon to throw some hounds off the scent. Reportedly, Falcon and others were dissatisfied with government handling of the UFO subject. They indicated to Moore that they would like to help his "research into the subject in the hope and expectation that I might be able to help them find a way to change the prevailing policy and get the facts to the public without breaking any laws in the process".

But Falcon and his fellow avians, as it turned out, were also interested in Bennewitz, and for reasons that ostensibly had nothing to do with UFOs. "It became apparent", said Moore, "that my supplying information to the government, through Doty, on the activities of Paul Bennewitz, APRO and, to a lesser extent, several other individuals, was to be part of this equation." Moore's own rationale for getting involved was simple enough: "Being a very small part of that process," he said, "gave me, I thought, something of an advantage. It became my intention to play that advantage for all the information I could get out of it."

Why our feathered friends were interested in Bennewitz, to the best of my knowledge, is as follows: Bennewitz had become intimately involved in an abduction case being investigated by Dr Leo Sprinkle, then a professor of psychology at the University of Wyoming, Laramie. The case, involving a woman and her young son, tied UFO occupants to animal mutilations, which were more or less rampant at the time in the American desert Southwest. Puritans may prefer that it was the reports themselves that were rampant, of course, and not the actual mutilations. Be that as it may... their testimony was largely obtained via

regressive hypnosis performed by Sprinkle, with Bennewitz apparently sitting in on some of the episodes.

Bennewitz became convinced that the woman witness had been the victim or recipient of an 'implant', a minuscule device the greys only too routinely insert in the brains of humans to control their thoughts and actions. How was that contact maintained? Bennewitz believed by means of low-frequency electromagnetic waves. At one point, allegedly, in an effort to cut the woman off from her captors, he even wrapped her in foil of some sort. Subsequently he took to trying to intercept the signals himself, apparently with some success. That is to say Bennewitz actually began intercepting ELF waves. Unfortunately for him, they were *our* waves and not 'theirs', probably a by-product of EMP testing going on at Kirtland, but perhaps a side-shoot of any number of Star Wars technologies, from lasers to particle beams.

In some manner, the Air Force learned of this. They approached Bennewitz directly, and presumably asked him voluntarily to halt his monitoring. As for Bennewitz, being in the frame of mind he was, this only confirmed his worst and deepest suspicions: the Air Force was in it too!

Subsequently, Bennewitz got on the horn, as we say here, and was soon beaming his message of dire UFO invasion to anyone who would or wouldn't listen, from fellow ufologists to members of the media, Congress and even the President. Not only did he not cease his monitoring, he promptly composed a computer program which purportedly 'translated' the incoming alien signals. Bizarre as his warnings were, they made perfect sense to a growing clique of ufologists camped outside Bennewitz's door.

If Air Force officials can be forgiven anything at this point, it is the lack of awareness that what they had on their hands was a potential raving loony; else they might not have adopted their next strategy which, according to Moore, was to bombard Bennewitz with "as much disinformation as he could personally absorb" in an effort to discredit him personally, should he receive any unwanted public attention". In effect the position at this point was of a civilian citizen spying and electronically eavesdropping on his own government, instead of the usual vice-versa. Bennewitz could be defused, however, if he were made out to be a UFO nut, if an when the occasion warranted.

As sometimes happens, the disinformation ploy resulted in unexpected side effects, namely a nervous breakdown on the part of Bennewitz, whose business,



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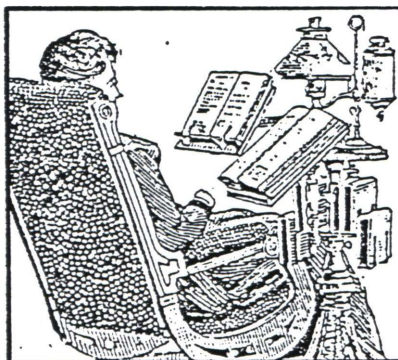
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BOOK REVIEWS

■ ■ EVANS, Hilary. *Alternate States of Consciousness; unself, otherself and superself*. Aquarian Press, 1989. £6.99.

In his latest book Hilary Evans discusses the altered states of consciousness in which we encounter Magonia, and where reality is deconstructed. Previous studies of ASC have tended to come from a medical/academic background, and concentrate on states induced by drugs, meditation and other techniques; Evans on the other hand discusses primarily spontaneous ASC's, especially those on the debatable frontier between psychopathology and parapsychology. These states, which Evans sees existing in contradistinction to the 'Usual States of Consciousness' (USC) - the world of daylight reason and commonsense - he divides into the unself, otherself and superself of the subtitle, and paradoxical states.

In unself there may be either a lowering of the state of consciousness as in sleep or somnambulism, or fugue states such as highway hypnosis; or a diminution of the personality and activity such as occur in schizophrenic or depressive apathy. In extreme cases this can take the form of nihilistic delusions, the belief that one is dead or is diminishing like the Incredible Shrinking Man.

It is perhaps the other three states which tend most to attract the attention of the psychical researchers, ufologists and the like. Unself states are states in which the experient becomes 'someone else', as in possession

trance, multiple personality or hypnotic past life regression. These states may be associated with physiological changes, the surfacing of hidden talents or the resurfacing of lost knowledge, etc. In some cases these other states can be seen as examples of symbolic suicide.

Higher Self states might be characterised by feelings of 'absolute possibility' or inflationary states. They may range from transient peak experiences to fully-fledged mania. The enhanced powers may be those of physical endurance, such as the fire walkers or the increased productivity of the 'inspired artist'. Also associated with this inflationary scenario is the hyperaesthesia which it has been suggested is caused by malfunctioning of the brain's information filtering system. People with mild, generalised hyperaesthesia may well come to think of themselves as psychic or especially empathic, which adds to the inflationary over-confidence and sense of specialness. Often, highlighted powers in one area may be accompanied by a narrowing or lowering elsewhere, as in many hypnotic or hysterical states: the person with hysterical paralysis yet with extraordinary visual or auditory hyperaesthesia would be a case in point. Extreme examples are provided by the *idiot-savants* discussed by Darold Treffert.

Evans leads us through a variety of strange experiences, all suggesting that ASC are natural (everyone dreams), and in their more extreme forms can be triggered by a

variety of physical and/or psychological stresses. In different people these produce greater or lesser alteration, blurring the line between the pathological and the non-pathological. The nocturnal UFO encounter and abduction provide a good example of how ASC can develop in the crucial brew of drowsiness, hyperaemias and anxiety, with diminished sensory input, which can generate near paranoid anxiety states in the most stable, with distortions of sensory experience. In some vulnerable people the loss of continuous intense sensory input may lead to transient depressed and fugue states with extreme feelings of helplessness and "being trapped". These feelings may be translated into abduction fantasies with their imagery of forced medical inspection, rape and bondage.

If one has a criticism of this book it is the over-dependence on antique sources such as Charcot, while the highly relevant works of Ian McKellar are passed over in surprising silence. Hysteria, like witchcraft and UFO abductions, was probably a demand-produced reality in which the 'patient' acted out the fantasies of the interrogator. This should not blind us from realising that Hilary Evans is one of the few interesting and stimulating writers in a field plagued by dullness. We might cavil about the odd detail here and there, but reading Evans's books in succession you get the impression of someone who is thinking new thoughts and groping towards something which may liberate our field from its many straitjackets

Peter Rogerson

■ ■ MOODY, Robert. *The Light Beyond*. Macmillan, 1988. £9.95.

In his latest study of the near-death experience, Moody comes out of the closet and declares himself a survivalist, but as with a number of these books it is difficult to know just how literally the author interprets the experience. For instance, does Moody believe that out-of-the-body experiences involve quasi-etheral etheric bodies which perceive the environment by means of photons falling on etheric retina? If so he clearly does not realise that this would make it impossible for the etheral body to be invisible! Equally, it is not clear whether he regards the transcendental locations as being quasi-physical locations.

A major point overlooked in such studies is that they are not directly studying experiences, but are dealing with narratives which have been socially constructed, in which experiences which may not be describable in detail, are reconstructed using the idiom of popular culture and cliché in an effort to communicate something of the ineffable.

Moody follows in a long tradition of pietistic tracts in making healing and conversionary claims for his previous books, such as in the story of the crippled old lady who was given the strength to get out and about again after reading a copy of *Life after Life* given to her by a neighbour.

Much of the book has a typical atmosphere of American 'new-ageism' as in the extraordinary claim that acceptance of an afterlife would put an end to war. Absolute religious faith in afterlife certainly did not deter the Iranians or the Crusaders. Many of the claimed post-experience character changes seem to resemble those of members of encounter groups etc., and the "feelings of being enveloped in an ocean of love", "loving everybody" and going about with a fixed smile, would be seen by many as classic denial symptoms. This does not of course invalidate the phenomenological character of the experiences which, even if subjective, are proudly meaningful to the experient. Peter Rogerson

■ PENNICK, Nigel. *Practical Magic in the Norse Tradition*. Aquarian, 1989. £7.99.

■ BARRETT, Clive. *The Norse Tarot*. Aquarian, 1989. £14.95 (book and tarot deck).

Nigel Pennick continues his retrieval of neglected aspects of northern European folk and religious lore. Firstly he examines folklore survivals of calendrical traditions, time recording, and perceptions of direction and orientation which helped to structure the framework within which the northern peoples (here basically considered as non-Latin northern and western Europeans) perceived their environment and the natural changes within it. He then considers nature lore; the nature and attributes of plants and places, particularly as revealed through surviving traditions and folklore. In the chapter 'Magic of the North' he looks at what is known of the Northern mystical and religious beliefs. An interesting section compares the warrior tradition of the Viking *berserkers* with the better known oriental martial arts, perceiving a common thread between them.

In the final chapters of the book he looks at the possibilities of re-using some of these traditions as part of a modern system of mystical and magical practice, and proposes a set of rituals that a latter-day practitioner might use. However, I think most readers will find the book of greatest value for its recovery and recording of the

wealth of popular belief that has survived, albeit precariously, to the present day. It is particularly rich in the lore of East Anglia, the author's home territory.

Generously illustrated, and with useful appendices and glossaries (I was pleased to discover Belisama, the Goddess of the River Mersey) the book is a most readable account of fast disappearing beliefs, rituals and survivals - and it tells you how many beans make five!

Norse Gods and Viking life form the basis of the illustrations on Clive Barratt's tarot cards. The quality of the illustrations is excellent: firmly yet delicately drawn, and using to the full the rich visual imagery of the Northern traditions - a contrast to some other recent decks from the same publishers, which have been weakly illustrated. The traditional tarot trumps have been very well interpreted to aspects of Norse mythology; sometimes so appropriately - the Hanged Man as Odin suspended from the sacred tree, for instance - that one is tempted to ask if this may have been the source of the original image! The suit cards show aspects of secular Viking life - rather idealised - but are also good, strong images.

Thorsons have recently been taken over and I hear rumours that their new owners do not approve of tarot. I hope this does not cut off what seems to be our only British source of new decks. *John Rimmer*



Consulting Runestocks

■ PENNICK, Nigel & DEVEREUX, Paul. *Lines on the Landscape; Leys and other linear enigmas*. Hale, 1989. £12.95.

Surprising little of this book is actually about leys as we know and love them. It is a detailed exposition of the variety of large-scale linear constructions, accepted by establishment archaeologists, produced by many societies across the world. English *curseuses*, Roman roads, the Nazca and other Andean lines, the Bolivian sacred paths. The story is brought up to date with a study of the continuing fascination with alignments as revealed by medieval and renaissance urban planning to such unlikely 20th century manifestations as Milton Keynes shopping centre!

A chapter looks at the development of modern ley hunting, and here one of the main purposes for this book emerges. It is attempting to wrest ley-hunting from the hands of the mystics, cut through the blatherings about energy lines and return it to rational discussion. The authors draw

a clear distinction between 'research-based ley hunting' and what, borrowing a phrase from elsewhere, we might call 'belief-oriented' ley hunting, and are devastating in their attack on the latter: "the excesses of modern ley work, usually dowsing, are often a mish-mash of personal belief systems masquerading as objective facts. The dowsing rod has become an implement to authorise the acceptance of subjective ideas as factual statements". Such iconoclasm "can readily lead to accusations of being materialist, 'scientific', reductionist..." which are already emerging in the 'earth mysteries' press.

The authors present us with a clear summary of a wealth of indisputable, but still mysterious, linear landscape features. They have also made the strongest case yet that the remnants of such features exist in Britain as leys. Anyone wishing to challenge this thesis will now have to do so without the aid of the 'lunatic fringe' who have previously helped scupper the ley-hunters' case. *John Rimmer*

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